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Armenian Riddles

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to the clothing of the deceased, and is communicable even by cloths which she has woven long before.

All the clans to which I have referred, except the Shans, are very closely connected, and one would have expected to have found greater uniformity in their ideas. As yet I have no explanation to offer of the cause of the differences pointed out, but perhaps some reader may be able to suggest one.

J. SHAKESPEAR.

ARMENIAN RIDDLES.

AT social gatherings amongst Armenians, proverbs and riddles are sometimes repeated for the entertainment of the company, and the following are translations, with answers, of favourite riddles used for such a purpose :

1. I tie it ; it goes a-roaming ;
I loose it ; it stays a-homing. (*A shoe.*)
2. A dark house ; a snug sleep. (*The grave.*)
3. There's a deep, deep well ;
All there is betwixt heaven and hell
Falls therein. (*The ear.*)
4. The more I hew it, the longer it grows ;
The more I smooth it, the thicker it grows. (*A well.*)
5. I grasp it ; I cast it ;
It dieth a year ; then again doth appear. (*Wheat sowing.*)
6. Unstrung pearls ; unwound thread ;
The Lord threads them ; man unthreads them.
(*A pomegranate.*)
7. Flint above ; no rock is it ;
Grass it eats ; no sheep is it ;
Eggs it lays ; no fowl is it. (*A turtle.*)
8. A snow-white field I own ;
With my hand it is sown ;
With my lips it is mown. (*A letter.*)

9. A snake, in a lake, with a flaming head. (*A wick in oil.*)
10. I rolled it down the mountain, it was not broken ;
I dragged it through the valley, 'twas borne by breezes ;
I placed a stone upon it, it was not broken ;
I dropped it in the water, it fell to pieces. (*Paper.*)
11. A roll of satin that never saw loom ;
A sack of flour that never saw mill ;
A stem I grow on that oak did not bear. (?).
12. Four divisions in a casket ;
There's a loaf in every basket. (*Walnut.*)
13. I hollowed the rotten limb ;
I buried a lion therein. (*Sword and scabbard.*)
14. The barren bore the germless,
O'er the crossing of the ceaseless.
(*Mule, salt, bridge, and river.*)
15. I have a granary the Lord hath wrought,
With marble pillars ranged round about. (*Mouth and teeth.*)
16. Lock of water ; key of wood ;
The prey escaped ; the hunter's trapped.
(*The Red Sea, Moses' rod, the Israelites, and Pharaoh.*)
17. It has three feet, and through its beard
It stands and eats my father's hoard. (*Candlestick.*)
18. Table of pearl ; feet of silver ;
Moonlight its jailer ; sunlight its key. (*Ice.*)
19. There is a spreading, leafy tree,
Beneath the tree a level park,
Beneath the park a pencilled mark,
Beneath the mark a brimming glass,
Beneath the glass a trumpet crass,
Beneath the horn a roomy loft,
The loft is full of shining scythes. (*The head.*)¹

J. S. WINGATE.

¹ With the above may be compared the collection of riddles in Carnoy and Nicolaides, *Traditions Populaires de l'Asie Mineure* (1889), pp. 276-82.